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FAMILY LITERACY

Fact Sheet
70

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What is Family Literacy?

Maryland Literacy Works Family Literacy programs, funded by the Maryland State Department of Education, promote intergenerational literacy development within families. Adults participate in learning activities that are individualized to improve their literacy skills while addressing self-sufficiency, employment and/or higher education goals. Additionally the adults receive training to become full partners in their children's education.

What are the components of Family Literacy?

Four components are integrated to create a comprehensive program for the family that supports parents as the first teachers of their children. The four components include:

- Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children
- Training for parents regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children
- Contextualized adult academic skill instruction that leads to economic self-sufficiency, a high school credential, or employment
- Age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences

How do parents benefit from a Family Literacy program?

The Adult Education component of Family Literacy addresses a wide variety of needs which may include English for Speakers of Other Languages(ESOL), basic academic skills review, General Educational Development (GED) test preparation, the Maryland External Adult High School Diploma, and career exploration assistance or referral. Adults receive assistance with transitions to employment and/or higher education and training. Through the Parent Training component, the adults receive information regarding child development, health, and socialization with emphasis on the parent as the child's first teacher.

Where are Family Literacy programs located in Maryland?

MSDE-funded Maryland Literacy Works Family Literacy programs offer a number of options. Local Adult Education programs enter partnerships with Even Start, Judy Centers, Head Start, Early Head Start, or local Family Support Centers. These services are provided in many venues throughout the state, including but not limited to local school systems, Judy Centers, community colleges, and Family Support Centers.

Who is eligible for Family Literacy?

Individuals age 16 and older and out of school who do not possess a high school diploma or its equivalent are eligible for Adult Education. Generally families with pre-school age children are eligible for Family Literacy programs, but some programs are designed for families with children of any age. The various partners may have specific eligibility requirements based on the age of the children or on the educational needs of the adults.

Are there any options for families who may be unable to come to a program?

Many of the Family Literacy programs are now offering Distance Learning (DL) for their families. DL utilizes videotapes, laptop computers, and the Internet to provide options for families that are house bound. Home visits are available through some of the programs, and some of the Family Literacy partners are able to provide transportation.

How can I get additional information about Family Literacy or locate a program?

Contact:
Family Literacy Specialist
Adult Education and Literacy Services Branch
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
410 767-0162

or call 1-800-358-3010